

NEWS IN *brief*

'Protect rights of housemaids'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a programme yesterday demanded a policy for protection of young housemaids and a code of conduct for their employers.

The demand came from a meeting on "Safer life of girl domestic workers project" organised by Young Power in Social Action (YPSA) in assistance with a Japanese NGO, Shapla Neer, at YPSA conference hall in the city on Monday.

The speakers also urged local government institutions and media representatives to cooperate for protecting the rights and security of female domestic helps. YPSA director (finance) Palash Chowdhury presided over the meeting.

Beheaded body found

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The beheaded body of a youth was found on the bank of Dhaleshwari river near Sonakanda village in Keraniganj yesterday.

Identified as Babul Hossain, 38, of Sirajdikhan upazila in Munsiganj district was called out by an unknown caller from his residence at around 1:00pm on Sunday.

Keraniganj Model Police Station officer-in-charge Mohammad Asaduzzaman said since then was missing.

Bangladesh's UN mission observes Independence Day

METRO DESK

Bangladesh Permanent Representative to the UN, Dr Momen, hosted a reception Tuesday evening at the Permanent Mission of Bangladesh marking the 41st Independence and National Day of the country, says a press release.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and his spouse joined the reception. Mr Ban, Dr Momen, and AH Mahmud Ali MP cut a cake together during the event.

CARETAKER GOVERNMENT SYSTEM Alternatives devised by two amici curiae

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eminent jurists Barrister Rafique-ul Huq and Dr M Zahir yesterday placed separate theories of alternative to the caretaker government system before the Supreme Court for holding parliamentary elections in a free and fair manner.

They placed the ideas while making submissions as amici curiae (friend of court) during hearing on an appeal against the High Court verdict that declared valid the 13th amendment to the constitution allowing elections under the caretaker system.

Rafique-ul Huq told the apex court a panel of 10 members of parliament would be nominated by the treasury and opposition benches before the House is dissolved.

The panel would submit a list of names to another panel of three former chief justices to select the chief of the caretaker government and its nine other advisers, he added.

He said the panel of former chief justices would nominate the names of the chief of the caretaker government who would run the country till the elections.

Strength of the Election Commission must be increased for holding the parliamentary polls in a free and fair manner, Rafique-ul Huq observed.

The senior counsel said the national elections would be held on four different days in four regions of Bangladesh to keep the law and order under control so that no chaos can take place during the polls.

The cast votes would be counted simultaneously on completion of holding elections in all four regions, he added.

Dr M Zahir said the political parties with representatives in parliament would nominate a ten-member panel of MPs before parliament dissolves.

The ten-member panel led by the president will run the country for thirty days and the parliamentary elections will be held within this period under a strong Election Commission.

The interim government cannot take any policymaking decisions other than doing the daily routine work, Zahir added.

A seven-member bench of the Appellate Division headed by Chief Justice ABM Khairul Haque yesterday held the hearing for the sixth day. The hearing will resume today.



Rain likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at one or two places over all the seven divisions in next 12 hours till 6:00pm today.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country, Met Office said.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:14pm today and rises at 5:52am tomorrow.

Country's highest temperature 33.6 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Ishwardi and lowest 17.0 degrees Celsius at Rangamati.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	30.9	22.0	78	77
Chittagong	28.8	21.3	73	77
Rajshahi	31.8	21.0	71	83
Rangpur	27.6	20.0	86	62
Khulna	31.5	23.0	72	62
Barisal	30.6	20.0	78	95
Sylhet	27.0	18.9	86	78



This open drain of Dhaka City Corporation in Muslim Bagh area of Mirpur 12 in the city is full of garbage, releasing stench over the area. Locals claim that this drain sometimes overflows filling adjacent roads with the waste.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

TCB to supply essentials at fair price during Ramadan

RASHIDUL HASAN

Trading Corporation of Bangladesh (TCB) will supply daily essentials including oil, lentil and sugar at a fair price across the country during Ramadan, said officials of the commerce ministry.

The special arrangement will start seven days before the Ramadan and continue until seven days after it ends to prevent price hike of essentials, the officials told the parliamentary standing committee on commerce ministry at a meeting at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban.

"We have asked the ministry officials to take measures so that general people do not face supply shortage and price hike of essentials during Ramadan," ABM Abul Qasem, chief of the parliamentary body told this correspondent after the meeting.

The ministry and TCB officials were also asked to build up a stock of essentials before the holy month, he added.

Besides the prime minister, the committee will oversee the market situation to avert any manipulation intended to increase prices of essentials when demand for those goes up, said Qasem, a ruling Awami League MP.

The ministry officials informed the committee that TCB will supply oil, sugar, lentil, chickpea and other essentials to consumers through their dealers.

Several members of the committee warned Commerce Minister Faruk Khan that the government will face huge criticism if it fails to control prices of essentials especially during Ramadan, meeting sources said.

In reply, the minister assured the committee of taking all necessary measures to control the market, added the sources.

On providing incentives to potato exporters, the ministry told the meeting that 20 percent incentive will be given to them for at least next five years to encourage potato exports.

Death anniversary

METRO DESK



Today is the seventh death anniversary of Dr Nourun Nahar Fyzennessa, a professor of the IER, Dhaka University, says a press release.

Dr Fyzennessa was a front-runner in the movements for women's rights as well as independence of the country. She initiated liberation war memorials on the DU campus and Rokeya Hall premises.

She was the first elected female member of DU Syndicate and the National Pay Commission. She was also provost of Rokeya Hall.

Dr Fyzennessa was also the president of Dhaka City Mahila Parishad and Usha, and vice-president of Women for Women.

On the occasion, foods will be distributed among the underprivileged children at Dr Nourunahar Fyzennessa Pre-primary School in Dhamrai.

Journalist Saber

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Today is the 40th death anniversary of martyred journalist Saber, says a press release.

On the occasion, a commemorating meeting and special prayers will be held at his younger brother's Chittagong residence.

Saber was burnt to death when the Pakistani occupation forces set fire to the Dainik Sangbad office at Bangshal in the city on this day in 1971.

He got the Bangla Academy Award posthumously for literature.



Farah Kabir, second from right, addressing a discussion on "the amendment of Chittagong Hill Tracts land laws" at the Jatiya Press Club in the city yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Escape, at last

SHAHEEN MOLLAH

Returning to Bangladesh was not an option for him as he had repaid only half the loan he took from relatives and neighbours before leaving for Libya one and half years back.

Mohammad Rubel, 22, the only bread earner of a four-member family of Manikpur in Noakhali, however, returned home dead as he drowned after jumping from a ship at Hania Port in Crete Island on March 6.

With him, bodies of 13 more Bangladeshis, who jumped from the ship hoping to swim to an island in Greece and get a job, were recovered and sent back.

Nine out of the 10 bodies, which arrived in Dhaka early this week, were kept in Sir Salimullah Medical College Morgue and handed over to family members on Tuesday. Many relatives of those missing in Libya came to the morgue but could not identify the remaining body till yesterday.

"We are now getting on a ship as our company officers are sending us back to Bangladesh," said Rubel to his uncle over phone for the last time from Libya on March 5.

Rubel, who used to drive a minibus in Noakhali, owed Tk 2.5 lakh. "It would have been very difficult for Rubel if he returned home without bringing enough money to pay the loans," said Rubel's uncle Masud Parvez Azad, who came to the morgue yesterday to receive the body.

Elders among three brothers, Rubel was bearing the cost of his family since his father died ten years ago, said. "The entire family depended on Rubel's income. Now, only God knows how the family will go on," Azad said.

Mohammad Hazrat Ali, additional director general of Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training, said Tk 35,000 was provided to each family for the funeral.

He said they would run DNA examination if necessary to identify the body that left in the morgue till Tuesday.

BDR MUTINY

16 defence witnesses give depositions

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Neither the father nor the daughter could shallow tears while a special court, trying 667 suspected mutineers of 24 Rifle Battalion, was recording depositions of the girl as a defence witness yesterday.

"My lord, I have nothing to specify. I just want to touch my daughter. Please allow me," said Havildar Hemayet Hossain, a suspected accused, as the court asked him if he wanted to specify anything following depositions of his daughter, Tahmina Aktar.

Tears also dropped out of the eyes of many of the accused and visitors at the makeshift courtroom at the Darbar Hall of Border Guard Bangladesh's (BGB) headquarters in Pilkhana.

The court then ordered the prosecutor to allow Hemayet Hossain to meet her daughter. Hemayet's younger brother Prof Dr Fayekuzzaman, pro-vice chancellor of Khulna University, and his nephew Sabuj Mia also gave depositions.

A total of 16 defence witnesses gave depositions in the favour of six suspected accused yesterday.

A total of 73 people including 57 army officers were killed in the mutiny in Pilkhana on February 25-26, 2009.

SCBA polls begin

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The two-day annual election to Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) began yesterday with 882 lawyers casting their votes on the opening day.

The polling to elect 14 executives of SCBA, including president and general secretary, started at 10:00am and continued till 5:00pm.

The voting will resume today with same timings and the result is likely to be announced at midnight.

The main contenders in the poll are Awami League-backed Sammilita Ainjibi Samannaya Parishad (SASP) panel and the BNP-backed Bangladesh Jatiyatabadi Ainjibi Oikya Parishad (JAOP) panel.

Incumbent president of SCBA Khandaker Mahbub Hossain (JAOP) and its former president Abdul Baset Majumder (SASP) are contesting for the top post, while incumbent general secretary Bodruddoza Badal (JAOP), SM Abul Hossain (SASP) and Md Shahjahan (independent) are vying for the post of general secretary.

Charge framing against police adjourned

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday adjourned till April 24 the charge framing against four police officers, including the then Ramna police chief, in a case filed for falsely implicating and torturing a Dhaka University student in connection with the attempt to kill Prof Humayun Azad.

The cops are the then OC Mahbubur Rahman, sub-inspectors Rezaul Karim and Naser Ali of Ramna Police Station, and sergeant Anwar Hossain, who was in charge of Nilkhet Police Box.

Third Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Mohammad Ali Hussain passed the order after lawyers for the four accused submitted a petition seeking adjournment of the hearing.

A gang of miscreants attacked Prof Humayun Azad in front of Bangla Academy on February 27, 2004, leaving him seriously injured.

On February 28, police arrested Mohammad Abu Abbas Bhuiyan, Mass Education Affairs' secretary of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) central committee, in this regard.

However, after a probe, police pressed charges against Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) members in the case while dropping Abbas' name from the charge sheet on November 15, 2007.

Link Shyampur with Wasa waste treatment plant

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Coalition of Local NGOs Bangladesh (CLNB) on Tuesday urged the government to connect the sewerage lines of Shyampur in the capital with the lone waste treatment plant of Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (Wasa) at Pagla of Narayanganj.

At a rally in front of the National Press Club, association members led by Nurun Nahar Mary announced that they would launch a tougher movement if their demand is not met.

In 1965, the land was acquired to set up the sewerage treatment plant while in Shyampur, the Rajdhani Unnayan Karttripakkha (Rajuk) allocated 528 plots for industrial purpose and 205 plots for residence, they said.

Wasa set up the waste treatment plant and a sewerage line was constructed in Shyampur but no connection was established with the plant, they said. The plant is used to treat only 17 to 18 percent of the waste produced while 82 percent remain untreated, they added.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Bangladesh follows 'zero tolerance'

Dipu Moni tells Bali conference

DIPLOMAT CORRESPONDENT

Foreign Minister Dr Dipu Moni yesterday said Bangladesh exercises "zero tolerance" in penal and legal policy towards human traffickers and migrant people smugglers.

Dipu Moni said this while presenting Bangladesh's country statement at the 4th Bali Process Ministerial Conference in Bali, Indonesia.

Bangladesh is considering a series of domestic legislations and international conventions to prevent human trafficking, illegal migration, and transnational crimes, she said.

She cited Human Trafficking Deterrence and Suppression Act 2011, Child Pornography Act 2011, and the Palermo Convention on Transnational Organised Crimes in this regard.

Foreign, security, home, and immigration ministers and senior officials from 42 Asia-Pacific countries are attending the two-day conference.

This year the conference aims to adopt a regional framework for cooperation on trafficking, according to a foreign ministry press release.

Dr Dipu in her speech also highlighted the security and socio-economic impacts of the lasting issue of Myanmar refugees and undocumented Myanmar migrants in Bangladesh.

During two-day stay in Bali, the foreign minister held several meetings including ones with her Australian and Indonesian counterparts Kevin Rudd and Marty Natalegawa.